Kelly

The Range Men c 1885 FOLKLORE

## REVENGE

Never was a more terrible revenge carried out by any man than that of a whisky trader named Evans, who, mourning the loss of a partner while trading with Indians in the Cypress hills, swore to enact an awful payment. The Bible says the Old Testament price was a life for a life, but Evans wanted the repayment ten thousand fold, and few men would have thought of the scheme he carried to success. Some time in the late sixties Evans and a partner were trading among the Blackfeet and other Indians in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan when they were attacked and the partner was slain, while the horses belonging to the white men were stolen. Upon making his escape Evans swore revenge, and, hastening to St. Louis, he is said to have purchased bales of blankets that were infected with a most virulent form of smallpox, which had been raging there. Carefully wrapping these bales, he shipped them up the Missouri, and when in the heart of the Indian country left them on the banks for the first passer-by to take. Of course the red men seized upon this treasure-trove with natural avidity, and the smallpox raged through the tribes, sweeping thousands, probably tens of thousands, of natives in the Blackfeet, Blood, Assiniboine, Cree, Stony and Sarcee villages into the happy hunting grounds.

WHITE MAN REVENGE

## INDIAN SUN DANCE c 1865

The Sacrees, Blackfeet, Piegans and Bloods were devoutly religious in their way, and particularly observed the famous and cruel Sun Dance, which is a Sioux ceremony as well. The Sun Dance, which was forbidden as soon as the Mounted Police had gained sufficient ascendency over the tribes, was carried out in all its horrors up until about twenty-five years ago (about 1890). The dance was the ceremony through which the Indian lad stepped from boyhood to the status of a warrior. It was a shockingly cruel series of tortures the neophyte must pass, giving no sign of pain, else he could not qualify as a brave. At the ceremony, where the entire tribe gathered to witness the trials, successes and failures, a youth entered the ring, old squaws took sharp knives and cut slits in the lad's breast, medicine men lifted the strips with pinchers and, passing rope or hide thongs through beneath the muscles, knotted them there. Then the other end of the thong was fastened to the top of an upright pole fixed firmly in the ground, and the youth must tear himself loose by throwing his weight on the thong tied through the muscles of his chest. Should he fail, showing indications of pain or suffering, he was disgraced. Another method was to cut the flesh of the back, tying leather thongs through these flesh-loops and then fastening buffalo heads to the other ends, the thong being so short as to allow the heavy heads to dangle free of the ground. Then the candidate danced until the skulls tore loose. Another method was to fasten the long thongs through the muscles in the manner described and then drag the suffering wretch with horses until the tortured flesh gave way. No man was admitted to the standing of a brave until he had passed this test of rope and pain, bearing himself

TORTURE

INDIAN SUN DANCE (continued)

throughout with a stoical dignity that would tend to prove him insensible to suffering. Youths of seventeen and eighteen years of age often graduated with high honors, but woe to the one who failed, for he was a marked man. The Indian mothers were as anxious for their sons to pass as the sons themselves. The women always attended the dance and watched and criticized, as in the perogative of the sex. One incident will show how they looked upon it. A young lad was being put through the buffalo head torture, and though he danced with creditable vigor his bodily strength was not sufficient to enable him to last until the heads had torn out. Finally, tottering, swaying, his face set grim and fixed, he shook one dangling skull loose, but could not tear free of the other. He bent, pitched, and sank to his knees, while the watching tribe stirred and rustled. The lad was going to fail, and already glances of scorn were being directed toward him. Perspiration poured down his face; he struggled manfully to reach his feet, but failed, and pitched forward, just as his mother dashed into the circle on a horse and, seizing the buffalo head, urged the pony away, dragging her son by the thong. Not a whimper passed his lips, not a sign of pain was visible to the critical audience, and eventually the flesh gave out and the lad was a brave, but a very sick one.

WHOOP-UP c1860

After the completion of the fort, which was officially named after its founder, Hamilton, a German named Wye was sent back to Benton for supplies. He was aked how the traders were getting along in the wild new land, and he replied cheerily: "We're just a-whoopin' on 'em up." Securing his loads of supplies he headed back northward, and the people of Benton said: "Wye's goin' back to whoop up again." Thus the post was christened "Whoop-Up," and the name stuck. PLACE NAME

Whoop-Up was the headquarters for the free traders. From that point adventurers built posts at Blackfoot Crossing, at Calgary, High River, Kootenay Lakes, and other points. They were hard, rough men, and they used hard methods to hold the Indians in proper place. If, in the interest of commerce, trade, or safety it was thought expedient to shoot a few Indians, it was done. Whiskey was freely handled; sometimes the traders held as shocking carousals as the reds.

The United States authorities tried futilely to stop this illicit traffic in whisky, for the traders brought this article in without taking the trouble of paying duty. They considered that there was no law in the land they were going to, they had to protect themselves, and they consequently had no right to pay any tax. Five whisky traders from Montana flitting toward Canada one afternoon were pursued by two United States marshals until they had crossed the boundary line. Then the traders stopped, and, presenting their ready rifles, intimated that the American officials had no right to come further. The latter saw the strength of this argument and returned home, while the traders built a trading shack and named it "Stand-Off," in honor of PLACE NAME

of the discomfiture of the marshals. Stand Off then became a rather important point for American traders, second only to Fort Whoop-Up.

## SLIDE OUT

One night when a number of men were at Stand-Off the conversation drifted to the duscussion of a suitable point to establish another post. One advantageous locality was discussed with much favor, and the men retired to sleep with the expressed intention of going there and building a store. During the night two traders who had originally suggested the spot, and who did not want to see it taken from them, slipped out and hastened away to get early on the ground, start construction and claim ownership by priority. When the other traders awoke they cursed cheerfully among themselves and christened the new post "Slide-Out,"in commemoration of the manner in which the two men had left Stand-Off.

PLACE NAME

1869

## DAVE COCHRANE AT MACLEOD

Other troubles came to Dr. McEachren, though he managed to free himself of them by resorting to arbitration. "Dave" Cochrane, mentioned previously, had squatted on the Waldon range and seemed to be doing very well in his own peculiar way. Dave had a taking manner and had accumulated quite a number of household articles and stock. His kitchen stove was a splendid one, of which he was inordinately proud, though the mention of that stove to the Mounted Police Superintendent at Macleod would have precipitated a riot. Some few years before, about the time Dave commenced housekeeping, the Police of Macleod received a large amount of supplies, including a very fine range, which was put in the yard to await preparation for its reception in the mess-kitchen or wherever it was going. Dave, who was in and out of town all the time, "lifted" a lid, a door or a leg, every time he came around, the result being that before a very long time had passed the article of kitchen furniture was denuded of all but the heavy frame. Dave could not very well smuggle this away unknown to anyone, so he displayed some more reasoning powers, slipping around after dark and emptying a pail of water on it and then waiting until it was red with the new rust. When his stage had been set to his entire satisfaction he went to the officer commanding and asked permission to take that "old stove" home, seeing as it was not doing any good where it was.

DAVE COCHRANE

"I used to belong to the force," urged Dave, "and they never gave me anything. I think you might at least give me that worthless old heap of scrap-iron."

"Where is it?" asked the superintendent, who really could not remember any "old" stove.

"Here," said Dave, and he showed him the disreputable results of his craft.

"I did not know we had any old wreck like that around," said the officer. "Certainly you can have it." So Dave loaded it into a wagon and went home. Some time later this officer was in the neighborhood of Cochrane's place and stopped in for a meal. A bright, new, shining range, big, warn and most comforting, was fitted into the kitchen and doing splendid work.

"That's a pretty fine stove, Dave," said the superintendent conversationally. "Where did you get it?"

"Why," exclaimed the host in vast astonishment, "don't you remember that stove? You gave it to me, you mind, and I've just polished it up a bit!" Tradition asserts that the officer simply scratched his chin and remained silent.

## DAVE COCHRANE MOVING OUT

At any rate Dave Cochrane had established a reputation by the time he had been on the Waldron range for a short time, and as the years passed the nervousness of Dr. McEachren increased, because he was mightily worried by Dave's presence. Dave Cochrane, located in the middle of a well-stocked ranch, with another man's calves rubbing right against his fences, tended to make that other man somewhat nervous, though he steadily refused to meet Cochrane's demands for restitution if he moved off, though the squatter even offered to be satisfied with a board of arbitration, instead of insisting on the full five thousand dollars he had orginally asked of the doctor.

Sitting on their horses one day, and arguing this old, old matter, Cochrane lighted his pipe, puffed it into activity and vigor, held up the burning match, eyed it reflectively, then, turning to his companion, said:

"Did it ever occur to you, doctor, that a tiny flame like that could burn out your whole range?"

Just that, and nothing more, but Dr. McEachren moved with almost suspicious alacrity, agreeing without more ado to pay any figure that an arbitration board would fix, if Cochrane would move out at once. Lou Murray, John Herron and Billy Hyde were selected as the arbitrators, and they decided that twenty-seven hundred dollars would be perfectly fair for Dave, the latter moving out as soon as he received this sum.

COCHRANE

The liquor business maintained its activity, the Government's granting of permits to individuals have placed a strong defensive weapon in the hands of the hotel-keepers, who secured sheaves of these permits and then were able to maintain a pretty extensive stock of wet goods. The whisky-smugglers were busy and performed some very interesting exploits in which the police were sometimes the victims, while the law-breakers themselves suffered quite often. "Dave" Cochrane, upon leaving waldron range, seemed to have embarked upon this adventurous sea of endeavor soon after, and handled his deals with his usual finesse, if a story of one of his ventures is true, an episode which old-timers in the district relate with enjoyment and detail. To lead up to this it is necessary to first explain what happened to Lee (probably Tom) Purcel and his friend Al Dowser. These two men successfully crossed the boundry with eight five-gallon kegs of whisky and cached them for future reference, finally going to open the cache after an energetic police trailer had discovered it and planted an ambuscade. The smugglers took their treasured kegs, put them in gunny-sacks, swung the sacks on their pack-horses, one keg to a side, and started down the long slope toward the St. Mary's, whereupon the police came joyfully down upon them. Dowser and Purcel displayed great mental perturbation and prompt action, talking vigorously to each other of the merits and characteristics of Mounted Police and cutting the sacks loose from the packs, while they themselves "drifted" speedily away before they approaching constables. Purcel was caught at Whoop-Up and sentenced to six months in jail, but Dowser was more fortunate, getting clear away, and then in a spirit of revenge stealing three Mounted Police horses, which he sold in Montana.

WHISKY SMUGGLING

This episode probably taught Dave Cochrane a better scheme, for we hear of him with a cache somewhere near that old one of Purcel's and Dowser's, his liquor handily enclosed in kerosene tins. Corporal Spicer, of the police, the man whom The Dog and Big Rib shot at some years before, discovered the hidden hoard and quietly assumed the duty of watching for the importers. In time they came -- Cochrane, one companion and a string of pack-ponies. The usual gunny-sack packs were arranged and tied on, Dave took his string of laden beasts, bade farewell to his companion and proceeded down the grade tothe ford on the river, Spicer appearing just as the pack-train was taking the water. With a startled yell Cochrane lashed up his animals and dashed across the ford, but the well-mounted officer overtook him as they emerged on the other side.

"I've been looking for you for a long time, Dave," exulted Spicer, "and I've got you now."

"I thought you was just tryin' to beat me out across the ford," replied Dave innocently. "Goin' my way?"

"I am, for you're under arrest," smiled the glad policeman.

"All right," agreed the philosophic smuggler, and they jogged along amicably enough until they came to the point where the trail branched off toward Whoop-Up, when Dave turned off in that direction.

"Where are you going," demanded Spicer.

"Goin' to Whoop-Up, of course," returned the other in apparent

COCHRANE (continued)

surprise.

"You're going with me," was the gim retort. "I told you that you were under arrest."

"Aw, I thought you was jokin'," expostulated the suspect in an injured tone, "but if you say so of course I'll go along. Just wait a minute." He calmly dismounted and just as calmly proceeded to untie the cans from his pack-horses and heap them on the ground. "I'll just drop it here and pick it up when I come home," he explained.

"You'll leave it on them and bring the whole thing to town," retorted the annoyed Spicer. "Your're under arrest for whisky-smuggling."

"All right," sighed the prisoner resignedly, and they ambled along in silence until they reached the police headquarters, whereupon Spicer dismounted and commenced to untie the packs.

"What'r you doin' now?" demanded Dave in vast astonishment.

"Taking this whisky off," explained the policeman, without stopping his work.

"You're crazy," the owner of the tins asserted with conviction. "That ain't whisky."

A hasty glance proved this to be true, the cans all being empty, and Spicer glowered as he demanded the explanation.

"Oh," said Dave easily, "I'm allus afraid of prairie fires, an' I'm takin' em home to sheathe my shack."

"Where's the whisky?" growled Spicer.

"The whisky?" repeated Dave. "Why, that's in Whoop-Up three hours ago. The boy took it on right after you started home with me. Why didn't you tell me that's what you wanted, en' then I wouldn't uv had to come way up here out of my way."

## 1907-1909

About this time, the cattlemen and ranchers were chuckling to themselves over the discomfiture of some homesteaders who had experienced hospitality from an old-time character who might be designated as "Bill". Cattlemen never especially loved the homesteader-farmer, but when the latter came looking for land the ranchers always treated them with the well-known hospitality of the West, fed their horses, gave them meals, gave advise as to good homesteads in another district, and in fact did all they could to assist the strangers. Bill was not too rich, and he was situated beside a well-travelled trail about a good half day's journey from town, so his place became a sort of stopping-house, and land-seekers visited him in herds, advised through word of mouth one to the other, or simply because of the natural convenience of the thing. Bill fed them as they came, giving food until his finances really began to get strained; none offered to pay or even help with the preparation of meals. They would just drop in, ask if they could have dinner, hang around until it was ready, despatch it in haste, and speed on to find that particular quarter-section they desired. Bill grew disgusted. He did not want pay, but he did want appreciation -- and a land-seeker was not really a pleasing object to him, anyway. One day five or six dropped in, some of whom had eaten there before.

BILL

BILL (continued)

"Hullo," they said. "Can you feed us?"

"Sure," declared Bill, beaming hospitality, "dinner'll be ready in jest uh minnit." The self-bidden guests filed into the shack and made themselves comfortable against the wall, while Bill cheerily proceeded with his preparations. Taking a great iron pot, he filled it half full of water, built a roaring fire in the stove, and sat down to wait. After a time he went to his corral, came back with an armful of hay, crowded this into the bubbling cauldron, and waited some more. The heat was stifling. Impatient land-seekers arose every minute and wandered out to cool; hunger drove them back; they looked at Bill and longed for him to commence cooking, but Bill was engrossed with his kettle, poking the contents with a stick, sniffing the steam, adding a pinch of hay, a dash of salt, filling the firebox with new wood, and stirring up the mess in the kettle again. Finally with a satisfied sigh he sank back and wiped his flushed face, reached for his pipe, and --

"Say," broke in an impatient and hungry "guest", "when'll dinner be ready, ennyhow?"

"She's ready now," replied Bill, his features wreathed with the smile that comes only to the cheerful giver. "Pitch right in, fellers," and he placed the cauldron on the floor where the visitors could help themselves.